

THE UNIVERSAL REMEDY

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A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“With His stripes we are healed.”
Isaiah 53:5.

I RECEIVED, one day this week, a short communication worded on this wise: “Wanted, a cure for a weak and doubting faith, especially when Satan disinclines to pray.” Anxiously desirous to prescribe cures for such maladies and for any others which may vex the Lord’s people, I began to turn over in my mind what were the sacred remedies for such a case, and I could only remember one, “The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” Our Lord Jesus is to us a tree of life, and by the leaves I suppose the Holy Spirit means the acts, words, promises, and lesser griefs of Jesus—all of which are for the healing of His people. Then my mind reverted to this kindred text: “With His stripes we are healed.” Not merely His bleeding wounds, but even those blue bruises of His flesh help to heal us; not alone the work of the nails and the spear, but the cruel handiwork of the rod and the scourge. Out of all this throng of believers, there are none quite free from *spiritual* diseases; one may be saying, “Mine is a weak faith”; another may confess, “Mine is distracted thoughts”; another may exclaim, “Mine is coldness of love”; and a fourth may have to lament his powerlessness in prayer. One remedy in natural things will not suffice for all diseases, and the moment that the quack begins to cry up his medicine as healing *all*, you shrewdly surmise that it heals *none*. But in *spiritual* things it is not so—there is a catholicon, a universal remedy provided in the word of God for *all* spiritual sicknesses to which man can be subject to; and that remedy is contained in the few words of my text—“*With His stripes we are healed.*”

I. I shall invite you, then, first of all, this morning, to consider THE MEDICINE ITSELF WHICH IS HERE PRESCRIBED—the stripes of our Savior. Not stripes laid upon our *own* backs, nor tortures inflicted upon our own minds, but the grief which Jesus has endured for those who trust in Him.

By the term “stripes,” no doubt the prophet understood here first, literally, those actual stripes which fell upon our Lord’s shoulders when He was beaten by the Jews, and afterwards scourged by the Roman soldiers. But the words intend far more than this. No doubt with his prophetic eye, Isaiah saw the stripes from that unseen scourge held in the Father’s hand which fell not upon the flesh of Jesus, but upon His nobler inner nature when His soul was scourged for sin; when eternal justice made deep furrows upon His soul; when the lash fell with awful force again, and again, and again upon the blessed soul of Him who was made a curse for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. I take the term, “stripes,” to comprehend all the physical and *spiritual* sufferings of our Lord, with special reference to those chastisements of our peace which preceded, rather than actually caused, His sin-atonement death. It is by these that our souls are healed. “But why?” you ask. Well, first, because our Lord, as a sufferer, was not a private person, but suffered as a *public individual*, and an appointed representative. Your sins in a certain sense end with yourself, but the sins of Adam could not do so, for Adam stood before God as the representative of the human race; and everything that he did brought its dire effects upon all his descendants. Now, our Savior is the Second Adam, the second federal head and representative of men; and all that He did, and all that He suffered goes to the benefit of all those whom He represented. His holy life is the inheritance of His people, and His suffering death, with all its pangs and griefs, belongs to those whom He represented. They did, in effect, suffer in Him, and offer in Him a vindication to divine justice. Our Lord was appointed of God to stand in the place of His people; a divine decree had gone forth sanctioning His substitution, so that when He stood forward as the representative of guilty men, God accepted Him, having foreordained Him to that very end. So then, beloved, let us never forget

that all which Jesus endured came upon Him not at all as a *private* individual, but fell upon Him as the great public representative of those who believe in Him; hence the effects of His griefs are applied to *us*, and with His stripes we are healed. His blood, His passions, and His death make atonement for us, and deliver us from the curse, and His bruises, smarts, and stripes, make up a matchless medicine to allay our sicknesses—

*“Behold how every wound of His
A precious balm distils,
Which heals the scars that sin has made,
And cures all mortal ills.”*

Be it never forgotten, too, that our Lord was not merely man, or else His sufferings could not have availed for the multitude who now are healed by them; He was *God* as well as man, and it is the most mysterious and marvelous of all facts that God should be manifest in the flesh, and seen of angels, and that in the flesh, the Son of God should most really and certainly *die*, and be buried, and lie for three days in the tomb. The incarnation with its later train of humiliation, is to be believed and accepted as an everlasting memorable display of condescension! From the highest throne of glory, to the cross of deepest woe, the Savior stoops—neither cherubim nor seraphim can measure the mighty distance! Imagination wearies its wing in attempting the tremendous flight! In every stripe that falls upon our Emanuel, you are to consider that it falls not merely upon a man, but upon one who is co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father; though the Deity suffered not, yet was it in so intimate a connection with the humanity, that it infused supernatural power into His human frame. Oh, what a rock have we to rest upon—a substitute covered with stripes; a substitute appointed and accepted of God, and that substitute Himself God, over all blessed forever, and therefore able to bear for us what we could never have borne except by lying forever in the lowest pit of hell!

Brothers and sisters, we all believe that our Savior’s sufferings heal us of the curse by being presented before God as a substitute for what we owe to His divine law. But *healing* is a work that is carried on *within*, and the text rather leads me to speak of the *effect* of the stripes of Christ upon our characters and natures, than upon the *result* produced in our position before God. We know that the Lord has pardoned and justified us through the precious blood of Jesus, but the question this morning is *how* these griefs and pangs help to *deliver* us from the disease of sin which before reigned within us. It was necessary that I should mention first, the justifying power of Jesus’ blood, because apart from our belief in Jesus as a substitute, and as divine, there is no power in His example to heal us of sin. Men have studied that example, and admired it, but have remained as vile as before; they have criticized His beauty, but have not been enamored of His person; it is only when they have rested in Him as *divine*, that they have afterwards come to feel the potency of those wondrous cords of love which His example always casts around forgiven spirits. They have learned to *love* Jesus, and then their admiration has become a practical thing—but mere admiration, apart from love to Him, and *faith* in Him, is a cold barren moonlight which ripens no fruit of holiness. Beloved, the stripes of Jesus operate upon our character, principally because we see in Him a perfect man suffering for offenses that were not His own. We see in Him a glorious Lord who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor; we behold in Him the paragon of perfect disinterested affection; we see in Him a fidelity never to be excelled, when, through the pangs of death He followed on to work out the purpose of His heart—the salvation of His people. And as we look at Him, and study His character as it is revealed by His griefs, we become moved, and the spiritual evils which had rule over us are dethroned; and through the power of the Spirit the image of Jesus Christ is stamped upon our natures. Jesus dying justifies us! Jesus smitten sanctifies us! His cruel flagellations are our refining! His buffetings are blows at our sins! His bruises mortify our lusts! Thus much then, upon the *medicine* that heals us—it is the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ as understood in our intellects, and beloved in our hearts—and especially those incidents of ignominy and cruelty which surrounded that death with deeper gloom, and revealed the patience and love of the substitute.

II. I shall ask you now, for a brief moment to behold THE MATCHLESS CURES WORKED BY THIS REMARKABLE MEDICINE.

Look at two pictures. Look at man without the stricken Savior, and then behold man with the Savior, healed by His stripes. I say, look at man originally, and apart from the Savior; naked, he is driven out of Eden's garden, the inheritor of the curse; within him lies concealed the deadly cancer of sin. If you would see that evil which dwells in each of us from our very birth developing itself upon the surface, you might soon behold it in all its horror near at home. A street or two would conduct you to sin's carnival, but perhaps it were better that you should not gaze upon a scene so polluting in the gambling halls, in the haunts where drunks congregate, where thieves assemble amidst oaths and blasphemies, and lewd language, and lascivious acts—it is there that sin stalks forth as a full-grown monster! In the moral and educated natural man, sin apparently sleeps like a coiled up viper; it is a thing in appearance, little to be dreaded; quiet and powerless as a poor worm. But when man is allowed to have his own way, before long he feels the viper's tooth; the poisoned fang envenoms all his blood, and you see the proof of its deadly poison in overt and abundant sin; men become covered with the visible blotches of iniquity, so that the *spiritual* eye can see in their character the leprosy upon them, and all manner of abominations, worse than the rottenness of the deadliest of fleshly diseases, constantly exuding from their souls. If we could see sin as it appears to the all-discerning eye of the eternal, we should be more shocked at the sight of sin than by any vision of hell—for there is in hell something which purity approves the vindication of righteousness. It is justice triumphant, but in sin itself there is abomination, and only abomination! It is a something out of joint with the whole system of the universe; it is a mist dangerous to all spiritual life—a plague dangerous to everything that breathes. Sin is a monster, a hideous thing, a thing which God will not look upon, and which pure eyes cannot behold but with the utmost detestation.

A flood of tears is the proper medium through which a Christian should look at sin. If you would see what sin can do, you have but to look into your own heart with an illuminated eye; ah, what mischief lurks there! You hate sin, my brothers and sisters, I know you do, since Christ has visited you with the dayspring from on high; but with all your hatred of sin you must acknowledge that it still lurks within you! You find yourself envious, you who hate envy; you find yourself thinking hard thoughts of God, you who yet love Him, and would lay down your lives for Him; you find yourself provoked to anger on a sudden against the very friend to whose call you would cheerfully yield your all. Yes, we do the thing we would not through the power of sin, and sin degrades and debases us; we cannot look within without being shocked at the meanness to which our mind, in secret, descends. If you anxiously desire to see sin at the full, come here and gaze down the fathomless abyss; listen to those blasphemous curses; if you have the courage, listen to those mingled cries of misery and passion which come up from Tophet, from the abodes of lost spirits! Sin is ripe there; *here* it is green; here we see its darkness as the shades of evening, but *there* it is tenfold night; here it scatters firebrands, but there its quenchless conflagrations flame on forever and ever! Oh, if we have but divine grace to be rid of sin now, the riddance will save us from the wrath to come! Sin, indeed, is hell—hell in embryo, hell in essence, hell kindling, and hell emerging from the shell! Hell is but sin when it has manifested and developed itself to the fullest. Stand at the gates of Tophet, and understand how full the disease for which heaven's remedy is provided in the stripes of the Only-Begotten!

Now, beloved, I said I would show you the cure, and I have but feebly talked of the disease itself, to let you see the greatness of the change by contrast. Observe, beloved, you who have believed in Jesus; observe already what a change the stripes of Christ have made in you! Since the dear hour that brought you to His feet, what different men and women have you been; indeed, in your case instead of the thorn, the fir tree has come up, and instead of the brier, the myrtle tree has come up. You who were once the blind slaves of Satan are now the rejoicing children of God; the things which you once loved, though God abhorred them, you now also detest right heartily. God's mind and yours are now agreed as to darkness and light; you no longer put the one for the other. How changed you are! You are a new creature alive from the dead; and what has done it? What, indeed, but faith in the crucified and contemplation of His wounds? Yet in you, dear friend, the healing is very far from being perfect! If you would behold *perfect* spiritual health, look yonder to those white-robed hosts who jubilantly stand without fault before the throne of God; search them through and through, and they are undefiled; let even the all-seeing eyes of God rest upon them, and they are without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing!

How is this? Where washed they these snow-white garments once so much defiled? They answer with joyful music, “We have washed our robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Ask them from where their victory came over indwelling sin—

*“They with united breath
Ascribe their victories to the Lamb;
Their conquests to His death.”*

They will all tell you that the perfect healing which they have received and which today they enjoy before the throne of God, is the result of the Savior’s passion. “With His stripes,” say the 10,000s times 10,000s, with a voice that is loud as thunder, and as sweet as harpers harping with their harps—“With His stripes we are healed.”

III. I want now for you to note, dear brothers and sisters, in detail, and yet so briefly as not to weary you, THE MALADIES WHICH THIS WONDROUS MEDICINE REMOVES. I shall not attempt to read you a full list, for they are more than I can count, but they are never so many there is not one which the stripes of Jesus cannot heal!

I would remind you, first, that the great root of all this mischief, the curse which fell on man through Adam’s sin, is already effectually removed. Jesus took it upon Himself, and was made a curse for us, and now there can fall no curse upon any of those for whom Jesus died as a substitute. They are the blessed of the Lord, yes, and they shall be blessed—let hell curse them as it may. The curse has spent its fury; like a thunderstorm which once threatened to sweep all before it, but is now lulled to calm, divine wrath has passed away, and showers of mercy are now following it, making glad the thirsty heart! Brothers and sisters, Christ has already cured us, most effectually, of the curse of God upon us! But I am now to speak of diseases which we have felt and bemoaned, and which still trouble the family of God. One of the first which was healed by the stripes of Christ was the mania of despair. Ah, well do I remember when I thought there was no hope for me! How was it possible, my heart asked, that my sins could be forgiven consistently with the justice of God? That question I propounded to my soul again, and again, and again, but no answer could I find from within; and even when I read the word, I perceived not, though it is most clearly there—the answer to that great question. But, beloved, when I first understood that Jesus Christ stood in the place of all those who believe in Him, and that if I trusted Him, my sins were all forgiven because they had been already punished in the person of my blessed substitute, then I had no longer occasion for despair; then I listened to the word of the gospel, feeling, “There is hope for me, even for me!” When I understood that there was *nothing* expected from *me* in order for salvation, but that all must come from Jesus—that *I* was not to be wounded, nor to be made to smart, but that *He* had been struck, and had been made to bleed on my behalf. When I understood that my life must be found in His death, and my healing in His wounds, then hope sprang up—bright-eyed hope, and my soul turned unto her Father and her God with loving expectations! Was it not so with you? Beloved, did you ever have a comfortable confidence in God until you had seen the stripes of Jesus? If you are wrapped up in a peace that did not come from Christ’s stripes, I implore you get rid of it, for it is a presumption which will surely destroy you! The only sure, solid, everlasting peace that can ever come to a palpitating human bosom heaving painfully under the pressure of sin is that which springs from looking at that blessed Son of God who on the cross poured out His life-blood that we might be saved by Him! For the mania of despair, the stripes of Christ are the true remedy.

Then if we suffer afterwards from any hardness of heart, and there is a complaint of the soul well-known as the *stony heart*, there is no obtaining tenderness except by standing long, yes, remaining *always* at the foot of the cross. When I feel myself insensible to spiritual things, (and I blush to say that it is no unusual feeling); when I would, but cannot pray; when I would, but cannot repent; when, “If anything is felt ‘tis only pain to find I cannot feel,” I have always found that I cannot flog myself into feeling by the threats of God, nor by the terrors of the law; but when I can come to the cross, just as I did years ago, a poor guilty one, and believe that the Redeemer has put all my sins away, black as I am, and that God neither can, nor will, condemn me, hardened as I feel myself to be—ah, then the sense of blood-bought pardon soon dissolves a heart of stone! I do not believe there is anything that can so effectually make the ice within us melt, and so speedily thaw the great glaciers of our inner nature as the

love of Jesus Christ! Oh, but that will touch you! It will create a soul within the ribs of death! There is a secret spring within the heart upon which the finger of the crucified hand is placed, and the soul arises from its deadly slumbers; Christ has the key of the house of David, and He can open the door so that neither man nor devil can shut it, and out of that opened heart shall proceed godly thoughts, heavenly aspirations, sacred passions, and heaven-born resolves; the best cure for indifference will be found in the stripes of Jesus! See the bloody drops of sweat, O believer, and will you not melt? See Jesus kissed of the traitor, led away with a rabble guard, slandered by deceitful witnesses, tried by cruel adversaries, buffeted by soldiers, defiled with spit—see Him afterwards hounded along the streets of Jerusalem, and then fastened to the transverse beam; behold Him bleeding out His blessed life for love of us who were His enemies, and if this tragedy does not melt you, what will? O God of heaven, if we feel no tenderness in the presence of Your dying Son, of what hell-hardened steel must our souls be made?

At times believers are subject to the paralysis of doubt, and as my friend has said just now in his request for a remedy, that paralysis may be attended, also, with a stiffness of the knees of prayer; and when these two complaints go together, we suffer under a complicated disease for which it is not easy to prescribe. And yet it is easy for the Lord to do so. See here the remedy—“With His stripes we are healed.” The blood of Christ is a deadly thing to unbelief; a sight of the crucified strikes unbelief dumb, so that he cannot mutter a single questioning word, while faith begins to sing, and to rejoice as she sees what Jesus did, and how Jesus died! Who could not pray as he sees Jesus’ blood upon the mercy seat? Who could not pray when considering the new and living way which Christ has opened by His blood? A view of the veil of the Savior’s body torn by His death will, if anything, induce men to pray! I think I could use arguments which might be blessed to drive men to their knees, such as the danger of a prayerless spirit; such as the enriching influence of the mercy seat; such as the delights of communion with God, and many other things, but after all, if the *cross* does not draw a man to his knees, nothing will. And if a contemplation of the sufferings of Jesus does not compel us to draw very near to God in prayer, surely the chief remedy has failed. There are some saints who have numbness of soul; the stripes of Christ can best quicken them; deadness dies in the presence of His death, and rocks break when the Rock of Ages is seen as split for us—

*“Who can think without admiring?
Who can hear and nothing feel?
See the Lord of life expiring,
Yet retain a heart of steel?”*

Many are subject to the fever of pride, but a sight of Jesus in His humiliation, contradicted of sinners, will tend to make them humble. Pride drops her plumes when she hears the cry, “Behold the man!” In the society of one so great, enduring so much scorn, there is no room for vanity; some are covered with the leprosy of selfishness, but if anything can forbid a man to lead a selfish life, it is the life of Jesus who saved others, but Himself He could not save. Misers, and gluttons, and self-seekers love not the Savior, for His whole conduct upbraids them; upon some the fit of anger often comes, but what can give gentleness of spirit like the sight of Him who was as a lamb dumb before her shearers, and who opened not His mouth under blasphemy and rebuke? If any of you feel the *fretting consumption of worldliness*, or the cancer of covetousness—for such rank diseases as these are common in Zion, still the groans and griefs of the Man of Sorrows, the acquaintance of grief, will prove a cure! All evils fly before the Lord Jesus, even as the shadows vanish before the sun. Lash us, Master, to Your cross! No fatal shipwreck shall we fear if fastened there! Bind us with cords to the horns of the altar! No disease can come there—the sacrifice purifies the air! Through hell itself might we go, Savior, all unharmed with its pestilent vapor, if we could but have Your cross before our eyes! It were not possible that all the blasphemy of devils and of the vilest of men, could pollute our spirits for so much as a moment if Your blood were always sprinkled on the tablets of our hearts, and Your deep humiliation always present in our minds. Forgetfulness of the stripes lands us in disease, but the sweet remembrance of the passion, and a blessed absorption in the mystery of the Master’s death will surely cast out all evils from us—and keep us from returning to them.

IV. I must now pass on to yet a fourth point. Observe carefully THE CURATIVE PROPERTIES OF THE MEDICINE OF WHICH WE HAVE BEEN SPEAKING.

You have heard of some of the diseases in detail as well as the cure on a large scale; now observe the curative properties of the medicine—for all manner of good this divine remedy works in our spiritual constitution. The stripes of Jesus, when well considered, arrest spiritual disorder. The man is brought to view his Lord as suffering for him, and a voice says to his rising lusts, “This far shall you come, but no farther. Here at Calvary shall your proud waves be stayed.” My feet had almost gone; my steps had well-near slipped had not my Master’s cross stood before me as a most effectual barrier to stay me in my fall. Many a man has gone post haste onward unchecked by any power until a vision of the man, the crucified man, has appeared before his eyes—then he has been brought to a blessed halt. Read the memorable life of Colonel Gardiner, for what happened to him *literally* has happened to tens of thousands *spiritually*—they have been enlisted to sin, and sold to Satan, but a sight of the Savior slain for sinners has made them pause, and from then on they have no longer dared to offend. Now, it is a great thing for a physician to find a remedy which will hold the disease within bounds so that it reaches not the direst stage of malignity; and this the cross of Christ does! It binds in chains the fury of unhallowed passion. What a miraculous power the griefs of Jesus have upon the believer; though his corruption is still within him, yet it cannot have dominion over him, because he is not under the law, but under grace. It is still a happier fact, that sin shall, before long, be utterly abolished; but to stay it, meanwhile, until it is eradicated is no small thing.

This medicine, in the next place, *quickens all the powers of the spiritual man to resist the disease*. “With His stripes we are healed,” because a sight of Jesus Christ quickens our newborn nature! It forbids us to live at the poor, dying rate so natural to our sluggishness; we cannot have Christ before our eyes, and yet go slumbering on to heaven as though spiritual work were but a dream, or mere child’s play. He that has really gone into the hall where Christ was scourged, and seen the streams of blood as they poured down His furrowed shoulders, and felt that they were all for *him*, has had his spiritual pulse quickened, and his whole spiritual life stirred! This fire has helped to burn sin out of its nest; this power within the soul has set up a counter-action, and pushed back the advancing powers of iniquity.

The stripes of Jesus Christ also have another curative effect—they *restore to the man that which he lost in strength by sin*. There is a recuperative power in this sacred medicine; He brings my wandering feet back to the ways which I forsook, and the way back is by the cross; He restores my soul, and the food He gives me to feed upon is His own flesh and blood. After sin has brought us into sickness, and sickness into weakness, there is no restorative under heaven that is equal to living in a constant daily sense of the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ. His sweet love so clearly shown in His torments at Golgotha encourages us; we feel that with such a Savior always caring for us, we have no need to be alarmed.

This medicine also soothes the *agony of conviction*. Anguish of heart vanishes when Jesus is seen as bearing the chastisement of our peace; he who gets to Christ’s cross, and trusts in Him feels that sin is still present in him, and mourns over it, but yet he rejoices because he understands that Christ has overcome his enemies, and led them captive at His chariot wheels. “I shall overcome,” he says, and the sharpness of the present struggle is not felt. “My sin is forever put away,” he says, “for Jesus died, and there is no room for remorse, or terror, or despair.” Drink of the spiced wine of atoning love, and remember your misery no more, O you sin-burdened heir of immortality!

But best of all, the stripes of Christ have an *eradicating* power as to sin. They pull it up by the roots; they destroy the beasts in their lair; they put to death the *power* of sin in our members. I know not how near to perfection in this life a believer may be brought, but God forbid that I should set up some low degree of divine grace as being all that a saint can reach this side of the grave! I dare not limit my Master’s power as to how far He may subdue sin even in this life in the believer, but I expect never to be *perfect* till I shuffle off this mortal coil; yet the grand result is none the less glorious! Absolute perfection is our heritage; we shall be freed from the least tendency to evil, and there will remain in us no more possibilities of sinning than in the person of our Lord Himself! We shall be as pure as the thrice holy God Himself! As immaculate as the ever-sinless Savior! And all this will be through our Master’s

stripes! Sanctification, after all, is by the blood of Christ; the Holy Spirit works it, but the instrumentality is the *blood*; He is the Physician, but the sufferings of Christ are the medicine. Sin is never destroyed except by faith in Jesus; all your meditations upon the evil of sin, and all your shivering at the punishment of it, and all your soul-humbling, and prostrations will never kill sin. It is at the *cross* that God has set up a mighty gallows upon which He hangs sin forever, and puts it to death! It is there at Golgotha, and *only* there, the great execution ground, the Tyburn of our iniquity, is there where Jesus died. Wrestling believer, you must go to your Lord's agonies, and learn to be crucified with Him unto sin, otherwise you shall never know the art of mastering your evil passions, and being sanctified in the spirit. I have thus tried to open up the healing force which dwells in the stripes of Jesus.

V. Now just a moment or two in the fifth place—I am afraid you will think my divisions are very many, and very dry, but still that I cannot help, I want you to review, for a minute, THE MODES OF THE WORKING OF THIS MEDICINE.

How does it work? Briefly, its effect upon the mind is this; the sinner, hearing of the death of the incarnate God, is led by the force of the truth of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit to believe in the incarnate God. The cure is already begun; the moment the sinner believes, the axe is laid at the root of the dominion of Satan! He no sooner learns to trust the appointed Savior, than his cure has certainly commenced, and will shortly be carried on to perfection. After *faith* comes *gratitude*. The sinner says, "I trust in the incarnate God to save me; I believe He *has* saved me." Well, what is the natural result? The soul being grateful, thankful—how can it help exclaiming—"Blessed be God for this unspeakable gift!" And, "Blessed be His dear Son who so freely laid down His life for me!" It is not *natural* at all; it is something less, even, than humanity, if the sense of such favor did not beget gratitude! The next emotion is love. Has He done all this for *me*? Am I under such obligations? Then I will love His name. The very next thought to love is *obedience*. What shall I do to please my Redeemer? How can I fulfill His commandments, and bring honor to His name? See you not that the sinner is getting healed most rapidly? His disease was that he was altogether out of unison with God, and resisted the divine law, but look at him now, with tears in his eyes he is lamenting that he ever offended! He is groaning and grieving that he could have pierced so dear a friend, and put Him to such sorrows! And he is asking, with love and earnestness, "What can I do to show that I loathe myself for the past, and that I love Jesus for the future?" Now he goes a step farther, and he burns with hatred against the sins which slew the Lord. "Did *my* sins slay Christ? Was it *my* iniquity that nailed Him to the cross? Then I will have vengeance upon my sins—there is not one that I will spare! Though it nestles in my bosom, I will tear it out! And if it shall entrench itself so that I cannot drive it forth except by losing an eye or an arm, it shall come forth, for not one of this accursed crew will I harbor within my spirit!" Now the man's sacred zeal, and burning indignation are issuing a search warrant, and he is going through and through his nature to search for sin, meanwhile crying, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Now, beloved, do you not see that all the healthy faculties of the new-born nature are by the griefs of Jesus set strongly at work, and even though sin may still remain within, there is a vitality about the new-born nature which will certainly cast out those baser powers, and by God's grace, make the man meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light?

VI. It is scarcely necessary for me to say anymore except to remark, in the sixth place, that this medicine deserves to be commended to all of you this morning, because of ITS REMARKABLY EASY APPLICATION.

I have shown you how it works, and what it cures, and whom it cures. Now, there are some material medicines which would be curative, but they are so difficult in administration, and attended with so much risk in their operation, that they are rarely, if ever, employed. But the medicine prescribed in the text is very simple in itself, and very simply received—so simple is its reception that, if there is a willing mind here to receive it, it may be received by any of you at this very instant, for God's Holy Spirit is present to help you. How, then, does a man get the stripes of Christ to heal him? Why, first he *hears* about them. Now, you have heard often of my Lord's stripes. Next, faith comes by hearing; that is, the hearer *believes* that Jesus is the Son of God, and he trusts in Him to save his soul; then, having believed,

the next thing is, whenever the power of his faith begins to relax, he goes to hearing *again*, or else to what is even better, after once having heard to benefit, he resorts to *contemplation*. He resorts to the Lord's Table, that he may be helped by the outward signs; he reads the Bible that the letter of the word may refresh his memory as to its spirit; and he often seeks a season of quiet, such as David had when he sat before the Lord, closing his eyes, and shutting up his heart to all beside the things of heaven. He views Christ groaning in the garden; he pictures Him upon the bloody cross; he sees Him suffering, and so acquires for himself all the benefit which can be drawn from the stripes of the crucified. All you have to do, poor sinner, is simply *trust*, and you are healed! And all you have to do, O backsliding believer, is but to contemplate, and to believe again! Beloved, we must let the old image be stamped fresh upon our soul! We must have the picture cleaned, as it were—it has been turned with its front to the wall, turn it around, and sit and study it again! Renew your old acquaintance with the sweet lover of your soul; return to the love of your espousal; repair to Calvary! Tarry in Gethsemane, live with Jesus wherever you may be—in retirement, considering, meditating, reflecting upon what He has done for you; this is the simple mode of application.

VII. All I have to say in conclusion is since the medicine is so efficacious, since it is already prepared, and freely presented, I do beseech you TAKE IT!

Take it, brothers and sisters, you who have known its power in years gone by! Let not backslidings continue, but come to His stripes again! Take it, you doubters, lest you sink into despair—come to His stripes again! Take it, you who are beginning to be self-confident and proud; you need this to bring you on your faces, again, in prostration before your Lord! And O, you who have never believed in Him; on this morning of clear brightness after the rain, may the Lord give you, also, to come and trust in Him, and you shall live! “Oh,” wrote one to me this week, “I have believed that Jesus died for me, but it does not keep me from sinning in anyway whatever! Our minister says that if we believe that Jesus died for us we shall be saved.” No, no, but that is *not* the gospel, and such a belief is not faith at all! I do not wonder that a poor creature should have tried such a gospel and found it fail. Do not these men say that Christ died for *everybody*, and then declare that if you believe He died for you, (which He must of necessity have done if He died for everybody), then that will save you? And yet there are scores and hundreds who are proof to the fact that it does *not* save them, because they can believe this universal redemption, and live as they did before!

This is faith, namely to *trust Jesus Christ*; it is the *only* saving faith; you cannot rely on Him and remain unhealed! You cannot take Jesus for your confidence, and remain just as you were! There is potency about Christ, as applied by faith, which *changes the character*, and makes the sinner a *new man* to the praise and glory of God! May my Lord bless you for His own sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON— Matt. 26:57—68; & 27:27-31.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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